

I would like to convey to his family and his many many friends, my deepest sympathies. Dick Nevins will be missed by all who knew him.

EGYPTIAN HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BASED ON REAL OR PERCEIVED SEXUAL ORIENTATION

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. TOM LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on the night of May 10, 2001, Egyptian police arrested 52 Egyptian men because they frequented a gay night club. Since then, these men have been denied counsel, the have been tortured, they have had their reputations attacked, and they have been arraigned on trumped up charges of "obscene behavior" despite the fact that Egypt has no laws expressly criminalizing consensual homosexual behavior. Furthermore, if these men are convicted, under Egypt's Emergency State Security Court system, they will not have the right to appeal and may be sentenced up to nine years in prison. Mr. Speaker, by jailing, torturing, and denying a fair trial to people because of their real or perceived sexual orientation, the Egyptian government once again demonstrates its disregard of the human rights of its citizens, and its willingness to deny them the right of free association and due process.

Egypt is clearly violating the human rights of these 52 men. Reports indicate that these men have been tortured with electroshocks, whipped while in prison, threatened with dogs, and they have been forced to undergo degrading and intrusive examinations designed to "prove" that they have been partners in homosexual relations. Mr. Speaker, the Egyptian government has not only harmed these men physically, but has also sought to hurt their reputations. Their names together with identifying details, such as their professions and places of work were published, and they were publicly labeled as members of a "Satanist" organization.

Mr. Speaker, astonishingly even anti-Semitism has been used to defame the detainees. For example, the pro-government press reported that one of the men "confessed" to being "immersed in Judaism." The alleged leader of the so-called "cult" was shown in an evidently doctored photograph in one newspaper with an Israeli flag on his desk.

The Egyptian government's treatment of these 52 men is indicative of a broad pattern of persecution towards religious and secular dissidents. Often these victims of persecution are members of Islamist political movements whom the government sees as a particular threat. In recent months, however, President Mubarak's government has undertaken a number of well publicized prosecutions aimed at secular dissidents. Most notably, the government imposed a seven-year sentence on Saad Eddin Ibrahim, a noted sociologist, for defaming the Egyptian State—a charge apparently prompted by his activism on behalf of religious tolerance and honest elections.

Mr. Speaker, this repressive intolerance has extended to the international sphere. Egypt led

the effort, at the recent United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS, to eliminate from the final document all references to vulnerable groups including men who have sex with men, sex workers, and IV-drug users. And Egypt also led the unsuccessful effort to deny the right to speak at the Special Session to the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission. Local human rights groups in Egypt have been reluctant to act against many of these abuses—fearful their own precarious situation, facing a determinedly draconian government, will be worsened if they defend stigmatized groups. The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, a prominent non-governmental organization, recently fired one of its employees because he pressed them to speak out against the arrests of gay men.

Lawyers have been reluctant to take up the case of these 52 men, fearing their own careers and even freedom could be endangered. The right to legal representation is a basic one, essential to the operations of a free and fair justice system. By creating a climate in which due process it is denied to gay men, the Egyptian government has undermined the basic human rights of all Egyptians.

Mr. Speaker, this body must not ignore the Egyptian government's attempts to violate the human rights of individuals based on their real or perceived sexual orientation. The US government and the governments of all countries should stand up and be counted against Egypt's growing record of intolerance and inhumanity. Our distinguished colleague from Massachusetts Mr. Frank and I, along with 34 of our colleagues are sending a letter to President Mubarak to express our very strong disapproval of the arrest of 52 men in Egypt on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation.

Mr. Speaker, human rights are universal. These basic rights affirm our shared humanity; they should not be applied unequally according to prejudice and fear. We must not let the Egyptian government's rejection of basic human rights go unnoticed.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DIXIE LUKE

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor and congratulate Dixie Luke for teaching English and social studies to seventh and eighth grade students for thirty years. After providing a positive influence for hundreds of students in their most critical years, she has decided to move on from the teaching profession.

Dixie is a longtime Colorado resident—she was born in Hotchkiss, Colorado, and has lived in Glenwood Springs for thirty years. Even now she returns almost daily to her birthplace to build the foundation for her next adventure, which involves making sheep's milk cheese, including the caring for the sheep. She also plans on planting a nearby vineyard.

In addition to teaching a more traditional English and social studies curriculum, Dixie

used an interdisciplinary unit to give her students a different perspective on learning. One example involved taking students on a day trip to Meeker in order to relate literature to real life. The class first read *The Hay Meadow*, by Gary Paulson, which is about a boy in Wyoming who has to go to high country to spend a summer working with sheep. Dixie explained that many of her students are from cities and don't have the personal experience to help them relate to the novel's setting. The class then visited the sheep dog trials in Meeker, where they were able to watch the highly trained sheep dogs perform several maneuvers. Another example of a favorite part of the job is the "Mosaic" project, which involves teaching the students to use fourteen different reference sources, and then to cite them.

While she is an old hand at working with kids, in the past few years, she has discovered a few new enjoyable aspects of the job. For instance, she says the results of new CSAP testing have provided more verification for how much her students have been learning. "The Glenwood Springs Middle School had the highest reading and writing scores in the district," she proudly explained, and those scores are also well above the State average. "I always thought that we were preparing the kids well, and it was fun to start seeing those results." Also, during her last five or six years of teaching, Dixie has enjoyed working with new teachers. One fun thing is "helping young teachers . . . to work with the kids in the classroom in a successful way," she said.

Mr. Speaker, Dixie Luke has been a fantastic teacher for thirty years. She has committed herself to her students and has helped to equip them with the education and confidence vital for their success. I would like to thank her for her longtime dedication, and I wish her luck on her next adventure.

LEGISLATION WHICH ENHANCES SENIOR CITIZENS' HEALTH CARE

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce legislation which enhances senior citizens' ability to control their health care and use Medicare money to pay for prescription drugs. This legislation accomplishes these important goals by removing the numerical limitations and sunset provisions in the Medicare Medical Savings Account (MSAS) program so that all seniors can take advantage of the Medicare MSA option.

Medicare MSAs consist of a special savings account containing Medicare funds for seniors to use for their routine medical expenses, including prescription drug costs. Seniors in a Medicare MSA program are also provided with a catastrophic insurance policy to cover non-routine expenses such as major surgery. Under an MSA plan, the choice of whether to use Medicare funds for prescription drug costs, or other services not available under traditional Medicare such as mammograms, are made by the senior, not by bureaucrats and politicians.